

variety of boards and committees throughout Greater New Haven. The largest state contributor to the State of Israel Bonds and the Israel Emergency Fund, Congregation B'nai Jacob has and continues to be a vocal and tireless advocate for the State of Israel and the restoration of peace for the Israeli people. Seeking the preservation of their culture and the enrichment of their community, the membership of Congregation B'nai Jacob is proud of its commitment to tradition and their devotion to their American home.

Congregation B'nai Jacob has flourished and become an important fixture in the community. It is the dedication and commitment of their members that has made it such a great success. Our houses of worship play a vital role in our communities—providing people with a place to turn to for comfort when they are most in need. In over a century, there have been many who have worshiped within their halls and many who have found peace and strength in the outstretched arms of B'nai Jacob.

It is with honor and the deepest thanks and appreciation for all of their good work that I stand today to pay tribute to Congregation B'nai Jacob as they celebrate their 120th Anniversary. Their contributions have left an indelible mark on our community and a legacy that will live on for generations to come.

MARKING THE RETIREMENT OF HAKEEM OLAJUWON FROM THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSO- CIATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the long career of one of the greatest basketball players in the history of the game, Hakeem Olajuwon. After 18 years in the National Basketball Association, he is scheduled to retire on November 2, 2002, before the game between the Toronto Raptors and the Houston Rockets.

Though Olajuwon, known as "The Dream," did not take up the sport until he was in his teens, he became an All-Star center and was recognized as one of the NBA's 50 Greatest Players. With his athleticism, best displayed by his signature "Dream Shake" move near the basket, he helped redefine how big men played the game.

In 1984, the Houston Rockets won a coin toss that gave them the right to the first pick in that draft. The year before, Houston had drafted the All-American center from Virginia, Ralph Sampson, and it was rumored that they might look for a guard, perhaps the young talent from North Carolina, an exciting player named Michael Jordan.

The Rockets, though, went with the "hometown" talent, another 7-footer, a charter member of the Phi Slamma Jamma fraternity at the University of Houston, a player then known as Akeem Olajuwon.

Olajuwon had an immediate impact on the Houston franchise, teaming with Sampson to form the "Twin Towers," a lineup that terrorized the NBA and created mismatches due to the height and agility of both big men. Runner-up in the Rookie of the Year voting that sea-

son, Olajuwon helped lead Houston to their second NBA Finals in 1986, after upsetting the defending NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers in the Western Conference Finals. There, as in their first trip in 1981, they lost to the Boston Celtics.

The road back to the NBA Finals was a long one for the Dream and the Rockets, but they returned in the 1993–94 season. That year, Olajuwon had perhaps his greatest season, and was named League MVP and NBA Defensive Player of the Year.

Houston and Olajuwon showed their true mettle in that year's playoffs, as the Dream carried the Rockets to the NBA Finals, where they defeated the New York Knicks in seven games for the NBA Title. This victory had special meaning for the Olajuwon—first, for being named Finals MVP, and second, for finally beating Patrick Ewing, whose Georgetown team had denied the University of Houston a chance at the NCAA title back in the early '80s.

The next year, with a target on their backs as the defending NBA champs, the Rockets faltered. In an attempt to shake up the team, Houston traded for Olajuwon's old college teammate, Clyde "the Glide" Drexler.

While the team struggled to a sixth-place finish in the Western Conference, Olajuwon led Houston on a playoff run like none ever before in the NBA.

In the second round, Houston became the first team ever to rally from a three to one deficit, and advanced to the Western Conference Finals. There, in what was known as the "Battle of Interstate 10," the Rockets eliminated NBA MVP David Robinson and the San Antonio Spurs. Olajuwon dominated the series, scoring at will against the Spurs, and led Houston to the NBA Finals for the second consecutive year.

There, he faced the future of the league, in a 7'3", 320-lb. terror known as Shaquille O'Neal. The Rockets, though, dispatched O'Neal and the Orlando Magic in four games, becoming only the fourth team in NBA history to win back-to-back NBA titles.

During this playoff run, Houston set new standards for excellence in the NBA. They won nine straight road playoff games and defeated four 50-win teams, both first ever achievements. Further, Houston became the lowest seeded team ever to win the NBA title. As for Olajuwon, he received his second consecutive NBA Playoff MVP, and averaged 33.0 points, 10.3 rebounds, and 2.85 blocks in the playoffs.

For his career, Hakeem Olajuwon averaged 21.8 points, 11.1 rebounds, and 3.09 blocked shots per game. He also has a career free throw percentage of .712, field goal percentage of .512, and averaged 1.75 steals and 2.5 assists per game.

He is one of eight players to reach the 25,000 point plateau, and is the only player to have both 2,000 steals and 2,000 blocked shots in a career. He is the NBA's all time leader in blocked shots, and was named to the First, Second, or Third All-NBA team 11 times. Hakeem Olajuwon was named Defensive Player of the Year twice, was on 11 First or Second All-Defensive teams, was a 12-time All-Star, and recorded just the third quadruple-double in NBA history in 1990.

The Dream is a shoe-in for the NBA Hall of Fame, and I am glad that I had the opportunity to watch him play, first for my university, and

later, for my hometown. Welcome home, Hakeem.

JOSEPH GORHAM HONORED

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the House of Representatives to the honoring of Joseph L. Gorham at the Organized Labor 2002 Dinner to be held on October 24 by the Greater Wilkes-Barre Labor Council and the Northeast Alliance Pennsylvania Retirees District 3. Joe will be honored for his many years of dedicated and outstanding service to the local labor movement and the community.

Joe was born July 11, 1943, in Wilkes-Barre Township to Robert John Gorham, a member of the United Mine Workers, and Genevieve Lombardelli Gorham, a member of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Tragically, he lost his father during a mine cave-in on August 17, 1956.

Joe graduated from Ashley High School in 1961 and was a member of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union from the late 1950s through the early 1960s. He also worked for United Parcel Service, became a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in November 1965 and was elected shop steward at UPS in 1969. In 1970, he was appointed to the executive board of Teamsters Local 401 and has served on the board both as trustee and recording secretary. In January 1991, he was elected to serve as principal officer of Local 401 and continues to serve in that capacity.

Joe was a participant in the first class of Leadership Wilkes-Barre and has attended classes at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Leadership Academy as well as the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Organizing School and labor management classes. He has served on the boards of the American Heart Association, United Way and the Labor-Management Committee.

Joe currently serves as treasurer of the Wilkes-Barre Labor Council, chief executive officer of the Teamsters Local 401 board, advisory board member of the Central Pennsylvania Teamsters Pension and Health and Welfare Fund, board member of Teamsters Joint Council 53 Health/Welfare and Pension Fund and chairman of the Local 401 Health and Welfare Fund.

He and his wife of 39 years, the former Mary Ann Polny, have four children: Jeannie Marie, Maria Josepha, Pamela Ann and Joseph Matthew Gorham. He is the proud grandfather of 10: Amy and Abby Keller; Duane, Maria, Nicholas and Regina Deno; Todd and Kyle Oravic; and Jacob and Genevieve Antonia Gorham.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives the achievements and service to the community of Joseph L. Gorham, and I wish him all the best.